

SARL NEWS SUNDAY 12 July 2009

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In the news today

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AUGUST IS SARL HF CONTEST MONTH

NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK

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SUITSAT-2 LOOSES THE SUIT PART BUT WILL STILL FLY

The SuitSat-2 amateur radio in space transponder will not be in a space suit but the package will likely still fly in space. Due to storage considerations on the International Space Station, the two surplus Russian space suits in storage were discarded via the Progress Cargo Vessel. One of these suits was to be used to house the electronics for the upcoming SuitSat-2 mission. But all is not lost. ARISS International has been informed that there is still space available for shipment of the SuitSat-2 electronics on a cargo flight to the I-S-S in January 2010. Also, a space-walk scheduled for April 2010 still has a 'SuitSat-2' deployment scheduled to be a part of it. As a result the AMSAT team developing the SuitSat-2 electronics on is focusing on completing the project in anticipation that deployment will still take place in the second quarter of 2010, but using a different structure to house the flight package. The discarding of the surplus space suits from ISS also removes the 'Suit' component of this amateur radio in space deployment. AMSAT says that at some point a new project name will be used to reflect the change in flight hardware configuration.

AUGUST IS SARL HF CONTEST MONTH

It is now time to start gearing up for the two SARL HF contests. The HF SSB contest will take place on 2 August and the CW version on 30 August. With more space on 40 metres and good conditions this year's events may see record participation. Get your antenna shipshape, put up that extra 40 and 80 dipole or inverted V antenna and join in the fun. As an additional incentive all logs received in each contest will enter into a lucky draw for a copy of the new ARRL book "Practical Antennas", currently a best seller in the USA. Listen weekly to SARLNEWS for updates and hints on how to participate in the contests. The rules are available in the contest bluebook on www.sarl.org.za.

LISTEN TO AMATEUR RADIO MIRROR INTERNATIONAL ON PODCAST

The SARL weekly programme Amateur Radio Mirror International is now available on podcast by courtesy of Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. Listen to the programme

on your PC or while in the car navigating the traffic jam on your cell phone. To access the podcast go to www.sarl.org.za, click on publications and select the Podcast link.

NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK

National Science week will run from 3-7 August 2009 at the Sci Bono Discovery Centre in Johannesburg. The Centre is in need of volunteers to run the special event station from the Monday to the Friday from 08:00 - 14:00 every day. Volunteers are needed to demonstrate amateur radio to the thousands of school children that are expected during that week. No less than 6 000 learners will visit Sci Bono during Science Week. Are you passionate about promoting amateur radio? Do you want to play a significant role in ensuring the future of Amateur Radio? Become involved with the Sci Bono Discovery Centre Amateur Radio Station, ZS6SCI. Contact Chris by email to chrisg@gpg.gov.za or zs6cog@gmail.com. Your help is needed at Sci Bono.

CONTEST NEWS

Well done Barry, ZS2EZ. Barry participated in the 2009 CQ WPX RTTY Contest earlier in the year. The results have been published in the July issue of CQ Amateur Radio magazine and Barry has been awarded the trophy for the highest score for Africa in the single operator, high power category. Congratulations Barry!

The Boland ARC has released the results of the Welcome to the New 40 Metre competition held on 14 June. Nineteen logs were received; one log was late and changed to a check log. 1st Daniel Mans, ZS3D, 90 points; 2nd Jan Botha, ZS4JAN, 88 points; 3rd Jacques Vermeulen, ZS1WC, and Gerhard Coetzee, ZS3TG, 79 points; 4th Mitchell Mynhardt, ZS6YH, 55 points. The complete results will be published in HF Happenings in the coming week.

The Sasolburg Radio Club has finished verifying the 21 logs which were received from 5 divisions around the country for the recently held ZS4 Sprint. Band conditions were favourable on the longer distances. Short distance communication on 49 m was quite a challenge for most stations. Not many of the official division 4 stations were worked by everybody. In the first three positions are: 1st Jan, ZS4JAN, - 107 points; 2nd - ZS1SKR, operated by Johan, ZS2CX, - 82 points; 3rd - Marius, ZS4MP, the SRK chairman, - 66 points; Points scored by the rest of the competitors are as follows: ZS2EC 60; ZS1PC 52; ZS4SRK 41; ZS1AX 37; ZS6PSS 30; ZS4BFN 30; ZS5AYC 30; ZS4PG 27; ZS6RAP 21; ZS5BG 20; ZS6APT 17; ZR4LP 15; ZS6YZ 14; ZS6GRL 11; ZS4AFV 11; ZS6BB 9; ZS6BTB 8; ZS4BS 2. The sprint called to try and work specific clubs calls to earn bonus points. ZS4SRK was 1st, ZS4BFN 2nd and ZS4AFV (the wildcard) 3rd. Congratulations to everyone. Certificates are being prepared and will be sent to the various participants shortly. Contest queries may be directed to the club secretary Riaan, ZS4PR, via e-mail to zs4pr@qsl.net.

The RSGB Islands-on-the-Air contest is on the air over the weekend of 25 and

26 July. The Boland ARC 40 Metre Sprint takes place on Sunday 26 July from 15:00 to 18:00 CAT.

The Boland ARC 40 Metre Sprint takes place on Sunday 26 July from 15:00 to 18:00 CAT. It is a phone contest with activity from 7,060 to 7,100 and 7,130 to 7,200 MHz. After two QSO s on a frequency, the station must change frequency. The exchange is the call sign, RS report and postal code. Each contact counts 1 point and a contact with ZS1BAK counts 5 points.

CLUB NEWS

The East Rand Radio Club will be holding its monthly meeting on 18 July 2009 at 14:00. All radio amateurs are welcome. The club is bidding farewell to the Upfolds at their QTH, 1 Paul Kruger Ave, Dalview, Brakpan. Marcel and Lydia will move down to Division 1 and a lot of radio related stuff will not move with them. A take and donate will be held on radio related components and a whole bunch of radio related stuff is available to amateurs. Come and support them on 18 July at 14:00. A farewell bring and braai is planned after the take and donate.

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the expected solar activity will be very low. The geomagnetic field is expected to be mostly at quiet levels. The expected Effective Sun Spot number for the coming week will be less than 5. Sunspot 1 024 has formed in the sun's southern hemisphere and is the best offering yet from the young solar cycle. 15, 17 and 20 m will provide best opportunities for DX. Conditions to the East and the West will be good from the afternoon onwards. During the late afternoons and early evenings it will be good towards the North. Early in the mornings it may be possible to make contacts with Australia and New-Zealand. During the evening 40 m contacts may be possible with Brazil. The North Easterly, North Westerly, South Easterly and South Westerly paths will be challenging. Long path propagation towards the USA is also possible during the afternoons. 10 MHz is looking promising late afternoons and after dark for the CW and digital enthusiasts. The best way to defeat the current low solar activity is to improve your antenna setup. Dipole or preferably directional antennas at at least 12 metres above ground level will make HF come alive for you again. A good antenna system is one of the best investments an amateur can make. Local conditions are going to be good on 40 m during the day time. 80 m may perform well during the early mornings and late afternoons over the shorter distances, e.g. between ZS5 and ZS6. 30 m may perform well up to the middle of the day between ZS6 and ZS1. 80 m is the frequency of choice in the evenings. Fortunately the noise levels due to static discharges are on the decrease making contacts over the longer distances a bit more pleasant. Now is the time to start making those contacts for your 80 m "Worked All ZS" award! Remember that the Northern California DX Foundation's international beacon network is monitored at the Hermanus Magnetic Observatory, ZS1HMO, and the signal strengths of the received beacons are automatically

logged. The graphic results are available at <http://spaceweather.hmo.ac.za> and are very enlightening. Select "Ionospheric Data" and then "HF Propagation Conditions" to see which beacons were recently and not so recently received. Remember that this is only a prediction and that HF has the capability to pleasantly surprise you, but you will never know unless you switch your rig on, listen and also call CQ. Please visit www.spaceweather.co.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

13 July Closing date for submission of logs for the SARL Digital Contest; 16 July - Closing date for submission of logs for the Durban ARC Mid- Winter Sprint; 18 July East Rand ARC get together; 25 July BACAR flight; 25/26 July Islands on the Air Competition; 26 July Boland ARC 40 m Sprint; 2 August SARL HF ESB Competition; 3/7 August National Science Week and ZS6SCI active; 03 August - First teleconference meeting of the SARL Public Information Officer network at 20:00; 30 August SARL HF CW Contest.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and the general public. The SARL also invites you to listen to the Amateur Radio Mirror International programme every week. You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League, compiled by George, ZS6NFB. Thank you for listening, 73.

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